

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method for removing a hydrated contact lens from a mold, comprising the steps of:
  - 5 moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold; and
    - 10 applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold.
  - 15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:
    - 20 moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens;
    - moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens and at a large angle to the first linear direction; and
    - rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.
  - 25 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:
    - 30 moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens; and
    - moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens and at a large angle to the first linear direction.
  4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the step of moving the lens in a linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens.
  - 25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:
    - 30 moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and
    - rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and

5       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the step of rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

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8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and

15       moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and

20       moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

25       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

30       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold comprises applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold.

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13. A method for removing a hydrated contact lens from a mold, comprising the steps of:

moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold  
10 to separate the lens from the mold.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold comprises  
15 moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the steps of:

moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens;  
moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens  
25 and at a large angle to the first linear direction; and  
rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the steps of:

moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens; and

moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens and at a large angle to the first linear direction.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the step of moving the lens in a linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens.

10 18. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the steps of:

15        moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and  
              rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the steps of:

20        moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and  
              rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

25 20. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the step of rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

30 21. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on

the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the steps of:

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and

moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of  
5 the lens.

22. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further  
10 comprises the steps of:

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and

moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

15 23. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further comprises the steps of:

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens  
20 in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

24. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold while applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold further  
25 comprises the steps of:

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

25. A method for removing a hydrated contact lens from a mold, comprising the steps  
30 of:

applying sufficient vacuum to an exposed face of the lens to hold the lens securely;

moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold; and

applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold.

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26. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens;

moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens

10 and at a large angle to the first linear direction; and

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

15 moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens; and

moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens and at a large angle to the first linear direction.

28. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the step of moving the lens in a linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens.

29. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

25 moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

30. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and

rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

5       31. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the step of rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

10      32. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

          rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and

          moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

15      33. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

          rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and

          moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

20      34. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

          rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

25      35. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

          rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

30      36. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold comprises applying

sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold.

37. A method for removing a hydrated contact lens from a mold, comprising the steps  
5 of:  
exposing one face of the lens by removing one or more mold sections;  
positioning a vacuum instrument over the exposed face of the lens;  
applying sufficient vacuum to the exposed face of the lens to hold the lens securely;  
10 moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold; and  
applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold.

15 38. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens;  
moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens and at a large angle to the first linear direction; and  
20 rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

39. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
moving the lens in a first linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens; and  
25 moving the lens in a second linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens and at a large angle to the first linear direction.

40. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the step of moving  
30 the lens in a linear direction tangential to the surface of the lens.

41. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and  
5       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

42. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens; and  
10      rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.

43. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the step of rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface.  
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44. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and  
20       moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

45. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
25       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface; and  
            moving the lens in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

46. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:  
30       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens in a series of distinct linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

47. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of moving the lens in a pattern tangential to the surface of the lens still adhering to the mold further comprises the steps of:

5       rotating the lens around an axis normal to the lens surface while moving the lens  
in a series of changing and recurring linear directions tangential to the surface of the lens.

48. The method of claim 37, wherein the step of applying sufficient force on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens from the mold comprises applying sufficient vacuum on the lens normal to and away from the mold to separate the lens  
10      from the mold.